

10. Open Space and Recreation

Introduction

The West Main Street Area is one of several areas in the City underserved by parks. The Parks and Recreation 2025 Master Plan includes target areas for locating an additional neighborhood park and community park in the area. Unfortunately, the City has been unable to identify funding sources to construct and maintain new facilities in the past few years. The planning area is currently served by ballfields at Riverview Park. However, due to the recent discussions about redevelopment plans for this area, the West Main Street Area may possibly lose this metro park serving its neighborhoods. A community park will remain at Riverview Park.

A neighborhood park is typically 3-15 acres in size and serves approx. a 0.5 mile radius/walking distance. A community park is typically 15-40 acres in size and serves approx. a 1.0-1.5 mile radius. A metro park is typically 40-200 acres in size and serves a 1.75-mile radius.

Pocket parks (2500 sf to 2 acres) in the West Main Street Area might help address the need for open and play spaces while encouraging safety, patronage, and connectivity to other recreational opportunities. Opportunities for parks are quite constrained due to the developed nature of the area. The City budget and Capital

Improvement Program allocations for these facilities offer short to medium-term opportunity for property acquisition, park development and proper ongoing maintenance by the City. Opportunities for nontraditional alternatives to public parks (i.e. public portions of private, commercial developments such as plazas, arcades, and even privately funded and maintained parks with related amenities) might help to work around these constraints. Multi-Use paths/trails to connect parks, recreational opportunities, and other pedestrian facilities/networks are amenities that should be pursued. The City has been unable to fund pedestrian furniture and landscaping to make the existing multi-use paths inviting, more useful, comfortable, and safe in hot conditions. Ample shade and thoughtfully spaced drinking water sources should be essential amenities.

Benefits

Implementing the policies, projects and programs identified in the Parks and Open Space Element would result in benefits such as:

- Relief points in high-density areas.
- Alternative forms of recreation and open spaces.
- Opportunities for interaction that enhance community connections.
- Preservation of land and protection from development.
- Improved quality or value to the area.

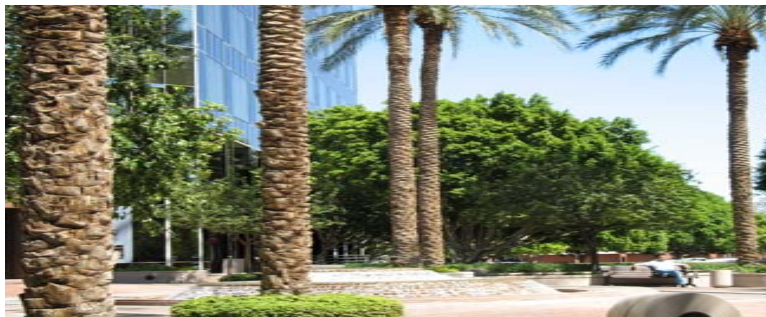
Policies

PRP1: Due to the high intensity development expected in the area, it becomes essential to provide open space and recreational facilities to have a balanced distribution of land-uses. Efforts should be made to acquire and accumulate land to achieve open space acreage in the area as per the Policy PR1.1c of the General Plan.

PRP2: Given the constraints of the existing development pattern, pocket parks are highly encouraged to act as relief points amidst high-density development.



Pocket Park at Main Street/Mesa Drive



Pocket Park at Southern Avenue/Alma School Road

PRP3: Use of innovative methods of land acquisition, including special purpose easements and tax-incentives for open space and recreational purposes are encouraged.

PRP4: Creation of dedicated or publicly accessed open spaces during development/redevelopment projects in the study area should be highly encouraged.

PRP5: Besides providing parks in the area, encourage alternative forms of open spaces and recreation such as plazas and multi-use paths.

PRP6: Multi-use paths should be expanded in the area through multi-use path easements in places such as abandoned alleyways, to achieve a network for such paths.

PRP7: Multi-use paths should be connected to pedestrian pathways along major streets, schools and parks in the area.

PRP8: Sufficient amenities like shade and water fountains should be provided along multi-use paths.

Projects

PRPRJ1: Study and identify possible locations for multi-use paths in the area. Easements through abandoned alleyways in the area can be utilized to develop multi-use paths. Explore the possibility of expanding the multi-use pathways along such lands throughout the area.

Primary Responsibility: Transportation
Department; Parks & Recreation Department,
Planning Division
Priority: Medium

PRPRJ2: Work with developers to encourage them to provide open spaces by dedication or otherwise, through the techniques of density transfer, development agreement and other available methods.

Primary Responsibility: Planning Division
Priority: Medium

PRPRJ3: Investigate the possibility of cooperative agreements between the City and private parties for incentives for dedication, lease or public access to open spaces.

Primary Responsibility: Planning Division
Priority: Medium

PRPRJ4: Investigate the possibility of cooperative agreements between the City and private landowners to provide for limited access for recreational purposes to lands designated as open space within private developments.

Primary Responsibility: Planning Division
Priority: Medium

PRPRJ5: Explore the possibility of utilizing “density transfer” as an incentive for dedication, lease or public access to open space, wherein density transfer would allow the participants to dedicate the land for open space and recreational purposes within the site being developed

and would allow the participant to gain density by transfer from on site/offsite within the West Main Street Area Plan boundaries. Lands dedicated during density transfer should be at least 2 acres in area for its efficient use as park.

Primary Responsibility: Planning Division
Priority: Medium

PRPRJ6: Conduct an inventory of vacant half lots and “orphaned parcels” in the planning area. Assess the possibility to reutilize them and develop supporting strategies and actions.

Primary Responsibility: Real Estate
Priority: Low

PRPRJ7: Assess the possibility of developing additional softball fields in the area based on land availability and funding for construction and maintenance.

Primary Responsibility: Parks and Recreation
Priority: High

PRPRJ8: Reassess the available funding sources to expedite the completion of Beverly Park in the area.

Primary Responsibility: Parks and Recreation
Priority: High

Program

Plan Review: Review of all development proposals, beginning with pre-submittal stage, in the West Main Street Area should include evaluation and recommendation based on the policies and projects identified in this section.